



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2022

### 7,356: Strategies of Social Science Inquiry

ECTS credits: 6

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Group examination paper with presentation (all given the same grades) (70%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - Presentation (individual) (30%)

Examination time: term time

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[7.356.1.00 Strategies of Social Science Inquiry](#) -- Englisch -- [Emmenegger Patrick](#)

[7.356.2.01 Strategies of Social Science Inquiry: Exercises, Group 1](#) -- Englisch -- [Emmenegger Patrick](#)

[7.356.2.02 Strategies of Social Science Inquiry: Exercises, Group 2](#) -- Englisch -- [Emmenegger Patrick](#)

#### Course information

##### Course prerequisites

There are no specific course prerequisites. Ideally, students are familiar with basic qualitative and quantitative research techniques and are attending the course '7354: Data Analytics and Causal Inference' in parallel.

##### Learning objectives

This course is designed to help students put research ideas into sound research plans and implement these. In so doing, it seeks to enhance key analytical and critical skills that are transferable beyond academic study to a wide range of careers. The ability to identify assumptions, weigh alternatives, make informed research-design decisions, and evaluate competing evidence is crucial not only to effectively understand and evaluate academic research but also to generally understand how knowledge is produced and to critically consume information and arguments.

The following learning objectives should be attained after successful completion of the course:

1. Students have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the connections between research design choices with (1) research questions and goals, on the one hand, and (2) the validity/reliability or credibility and relevance of research results, on the other hand;
2. Students demonstrate proficiency in critically evaluating and discussing the research design choices of other projects and researchers;
3. Students show the ability to apply comprehensive knowledge of the key components of research designs when making and justifying design choices for their own project.

##### Course content

This course provides hands-on advice on how to make choices in designing scientific research projects in International Affairs as well as how to make those choices amongst a variety of different prominent methods of data collection and analysis. It engages with some fundamental epistemological and methodological questions from a variety of perspectives, as well as with more practical issues related to the formulation of a research question, the choice of a research approach, and the development of different steps in the research plan.

Using research questions developed by the course participants, we discuss how different methodological assumptions



underlying research are manifested in designing research projects and in analyzing and presenting the data collected in the context of this design.

Based on this discussion, students conduct their own research project. To this end, they form up to twelve small groups in which they formulate a research question, develop a research design suitable to answer it, and implement it. The course leads the students step by step through this work process and provides for close supervision and support.

## Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course has three components: lecture sessions (12), exercise meetings (3 per group), and self-study. The lecture sessions take place on a weekly basis, the exercise sessions according to a group-specific schedule. Students are expected to attend the weekly lecture sessions, to participate in the exercise meetings, and to contribute actively. This includes reading the literature, working on the individual research steps, participating in the plenary discussions, presenting their own research project (as work in progress), and providing feedback to other student teams.

The first six weeks of the lecture sessions are devoted to the principles of good research designs. However, for the most part, this course follows the principle of Confucius: "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." (Although I do hope that at least parts of these initial meetings stick nonetheless.) This is to say that from week 1, students are encouraged to develop, in groups, their research projects. The exercise meetings before the break are reserved for self-study (the first two weeks) and group meetings with the lecturer (weeks 3 to 6).

In the second half of the course (after the break), all groups will present their work (understood as work in progress) in the lecture session and receive feedback from assigned discussants (from other student teams), the lecturer, and all other participants (weeks 7 to 12). In addition, in the exercise sessions, all groups will meet twice with the lecturer to discuss their research projects.

## Course literature

All course relevant literature will be made available on StudyNet. This course builds on two textbooks by John Gerring:

Gerring, John (2012). *Social Science Methodology: A Unified Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gerring, John and Dino Christenson (2017). *Applied Social Science Methodology: An Introductory Guide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Additional course information

Patrick Emmenegger is a Professor of Comparative Political Economy and Public Policy. For information on his research, please visit his website at <https://www.pemmenegger.com>.

## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/2)

##### Examination time and form

Decentral - Group examination paper with presentation (all given the same grades) (70%)

Examination time: term time

##### Remark

Group examination paper with presentation

##### Examination-aid rule

Term papers

Written work must be written without outside help according to the known citation standards, and a declaration of authorship must be attached, which is available as a template on the StudentWeb.

Documentation (quotations, bibliography, etc.) must be carried out universally and consistently according to the requirements of



the chosen/specified citation standard such as e.g. APA or MLA.

The legal standard is recommended for legal work (cf. by way of example: FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R., SCHINDLER B., Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende (the latest edition in each case), or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The reference sources of information (paraphrases, quotations, etc.) that has been taken over literally or in the sense of the original text must be integrated into the text in accordance with the requirements of the citation standard used. Informative and bibliographical notes must be included as footnotes (recommendations and standards e.g. in METZGER, C., Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien (latest edition)).

For all written work at the University of St.Gallen, the indication of page numbers is mandatory, regardless of the standard chosen. Where page numbers are missing in sources, the precise designation must be made differently: chapter or section title, section number, article, etc.

### Supplementary aids

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### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

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## 2. Examination sub part (2/2)

### Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (individual) (30%)

Examination time: term time

### Remark

Discussion of project (incl. handout)

### Examination-aid rule

Presentations

In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

### Supplementary aids

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### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

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## Examination content

Students have a two-fold role as participants in the course: (1) They study and discuss the research of their peers, and (2) they produce research of their own. In both roles, students are asked to demonstrate critical thinking skills, which go beyond presenting information and reproducing knowledge.

(1) Group examination paper with presentation (70%): The groups are expected to develop a research paper (max. 8'000 words, excl. bibliography and appendices) in which the student teams present their whole research project, including literature review, theoretical framework, empirical analysis, and discussion of the results. Over the course of the lecture, the student teams are expected to present their ongoing work in one of the lecture sessions (sharing a detailed handout with all course participants before the corresponding meeting) and discuss their work with the lecturer in three separate exercise meetings. The feedback from both the lecturer and the other students shall help students implement the research projects.

(2) Individual presentation (30%): Good research is a collective exercise. All course participants are expected to prepare detailed comments and constructive feedback on another student team's research project (based on their handout). They also prepare a handout with their comments and feedback, which they can share with the student team (and the lecturer).



## Examination relevant literature

All relevant course readings will be made available on StudyNet at latest by December 21, 2022.

### Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW51) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 42 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 34 (Thursday, 25 August 2022);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 17 October 2022);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 17 October 2022);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 45 (Monday, 7 November 2022).